
Higher Education Committee

SSB 5376

Brief Description: Requiring the higher education coordinating board to develop a grant program to encourage training for students studying in the medical field to work with individuals with disabilities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Delvin, Shin, Haugen, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe and Kline).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB), subject to appropriation of funds for this purpose, to develop a grant program for training projects that focus on improving services to individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Provides that the HECB may administer the grant program in consultation with the Department of Health.
- Requires a report to the Legislature regarding grants awarded and progress in related areas.

Hearing Date: 2/17/10

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Some research has indicated that people with developmental disabilities have greater difficulty accessing health care that meets their unique needs. A 2005 report by Special Olympics, Inc. concluded that physicians, dentists, and other health professionals do not receive adequate training to treat individuals with developmental disabilities. Within the last few years, reports

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from the Surgeon General of the United States have also found a need to increase training among health care professionals to address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) administers the state's student financial aid programs and provides strategic planning, coordination, monitoring, and policy analysis for higher education in Washington.

Summary of Bill:

It is recognized that students in various health care fields at public and private institutions of higher education and technical schools throughout the state would benefit from specialized training and exposure to the unique care needs of adults with developmental disabilities.

Subject to the appropriation of funds for the purpose, the HECB shall develop a centralized grant program for institutions to develop training projects aimed at improving the provision of medical services to adult individuals with developmental disabilities. The HECB may administer the grant program in consultation with the Department of Health. By December 1, 2010, the HECB must report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature regarding grants awarded. The HECB must also report on any other efforts or progress in expanding or improving training with respect to the provision of medical services to adult individuals with developmental disabilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 15, 2010.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.